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REPORT ON THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE INTER-AGENCY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR THE UNITED NATIONS TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS DECADE IN AFRICA

(Addis Ababa, 27-30 March 1985)

A. ORGANIZATION

1. The Extraordinary meeting of the Inter-Agency Co-ordinating Committee for the United Nations Transport and Communications Decade in Africa was held at Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 27 to 30 March 1985 under the Chairmanship of Professor Adebayo Adedeji, Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa.

B. ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

2. Representatives of the following United Nations organizations and specialized agencies and African inter-governmental organizations took part in the work of the meeting: United Nations Conference of Trade and Development (UNCTAD), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), Universal Postal Union (UPU), International Maritime Organization (IMO), African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Mano River Union (MRU), Ministerial Conference of West and Central African States on Maritime Transport (MINCONMAR), Organization of African Unity (OAU), Pan-African Postal Union (PAPU), Port Management Association for Eastern and Southern Africa (PMAESA), Trans-African Highway Authority (TAHA), International Labour Organization (ILO), Union of African Railways (UAR), Union of National Radio and Television Organization in Africa (UNRTOA), ASECNA, Pan-African Telecommunications Union (PATU), Union douanière des états de l'Afrique centrale (UDEAC). The following participated in the meeting as observers: International Road Federation (IRF), World Meteorological Organization (WMO), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

C. OPENING OF THE MEETING

3. In his opening statement the Executive Secretary of the ECA, Prof. Adebayo Adedeji welcomed all the participants to Addis Ababa for the Extraordinary Meeting of the Inter-agency Co-ordinating Committee (IACC).

4. He reminded the participants of the agreement, during the last IACC meeting held in January 1985, on preparation of a progress report reflecting the Decade activities in 1984. He further said that the report to be prepared according to the format already agreed upon during the January meeting, was to be a single comprehensive annual report detailing the progress in the implementation of the Decade programme in 1984, taking into account what ECA and other agencies have accomplished. He reported that some members of the committee had submitted their contributions to the report and reminded those who had not done so to provide them during the meeting of sub-sectoral working groups.

5. With regard to those projects which involved more than one agency, he said it was better to report on the progress of such projects instead of detailing separate reports on each agency's contributions.

6. Regarding the contents of various chapters of the consolidated draft report, which was distributed to participants, he informed the meeting that draft chapters one, two, five and six were complete. He urged the modal groups to work hard and complete chapters three and four for discussion in the plenary.

7. Concerning participation in the modal groups, he said that multidisciplinary organizations such as the ECOWAS, ILO, MRU, etc. could choose any one modal group they wished to join or even spend some time with more than one.

8. After urging the modal groups to complete their modal reports, he announced the working places and composition of each group and wished them success in their work.

D. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

9. The following agenda was adopted:

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work
3. Working group meetings to finalize sectoral reports on implementation of regional, subregional and inter-State link projects (Chapter III)
4. Plenary session to consider 1984 report on UNTACDA
   - (a) Chapter I Introduction (overview and summary)
   - (b) II Implementation of the UNTACDA programme at nationl level (progress and problems)
   - (c) III Implementation of regional, subregional and inter-State link projects
   - (d) IV Contributions of United Nations specialized agencies and African intergovernmental organizations to the implementation of UNTACDA
   - (e) V International co-operation and support for the implementation of UNTACDA
   - (f) VI Special developments and issues and problems of significance during the year
5. Date and venue of the next meeting
6. Any other business
7. Adoption of the report
8. Closure of the meeting.

E. SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

Chapter I: Introduction (agenda item 4 (a))

10. The Committee considered Chapter 1 of the draft report submitted by ECA and made the following amendments:

Para. 16 was amended to read as follows: "The PANAFTEL project also made significant progress in 1984 with two satellite earth stations and five microwave links being put into service with several others under construction. Now that the link between Botswana and Zimbabwe is in service, it has made possible telephone services between Botswana and Djibouti and the countries in between without transiting through Europe".

Chapter II: Implementation of the UNTACDA programme at national level (agenda item 4 (b))

11. In Chapter II, the following general observations and specific amendments were made:

The representative of ITU suggested that paragraph 28 be amended by the addition at the end of this sentence "However, these projects were complementary to the Decade ones and would help substantially towards the achievement of the Decade objectives".

Paragraph 41 was amended by deleting the part of the sentence "is still largely unimplemented ...." and replacing it with "has started off slowly".

The figure "90" in the last but two line of the paragraph was amended to read "19".

With respect to annexes II-IV, it was suggested and agreed that the unit of currency should be specified (i.e. US$m) in all the tables.

12. The ITU representative informed the meeting that the figures in Annex III on telecommunications were subject to revision after consultations with the secretariat on the basis of additional information to be provided by his organization. Similarly, the summary table on communications in Annex IV would be revised.

Chapter III: Implementation of regional, subregional and inter-State links projects (Agenda item 4(c))

13. The committee considered the report of the working group on air transport which comprised the text on optimum development of air services combined with the conclusions of the ICAO study entitled: "International passenger and freight transport in Africa". The working group decided to include only the activities relating to optimum development of air services and freedoms of the air in Chapter III and to transfer the other activities to Chapter IV. The committee adopted this report.

14. Considering part C of this item entitled "Development of transport manpower and training centres in Africa", the Committee reviewed paragraph 143 of Annex III of the report of the Working Group on rail, inland water and multimodal transport and agreed to replace it with paragraph 129 of the original draft report.

The Committee examined the report of the working group on postal services on this issue and decided to include the relevant information in the general report.

15. The representative of MINCONMAR noted that regional and subregional projects on maritime transport were not duly reflected in the chapter and strongly recommended that the most important projects be included in it. The Committee decided that ECA secretariat should incorporate, in the report, available information on the projects.

Chapter IV: Contribution of the United Nations Specialized Agencies and African Intergovernmental Organizations to the Implementation of UNTACDA (agenda item 4)

(a) Roads and Road Transport

16. The representative of ECOWAS, the designated lead agency for the Roads and Road Transport (RRT) Working Group, in presenting the report of his Group to Plenary, briefly highlighted the achievements of each agency. He said that TARA, MRU, IRF, ILO, UDEAC, TEAHA, ECA and ECOWAS participated in the RRT Working Group. He said the RRT Group had adopted executive summaries of the accomplishments of the agencies for inclusion in the UNTACDA annual report. The meeting adopted the executive summaries as presented.

(b) Railways, Inland Water and Multimodal transport

17. Contributions in respect of the rail transport sector dealt mainly with training and establishment of training institutions as well as execution of feasibility studies and related activities.

18. With respect to the inland water transport sector, contributions related to training and technical assistance, studies on the navigability and improvement of waterways and purchase of equipment.

19. Contributions in respect of the multimodal transport sector were technical assistance and execution of various studies.

20. After considering the report, the committee requested ECA to finalize it and to include it in the final report.

(c) Air Transport

21. The committee considered the report of the working group on air transport and adopted the amended texts on the activities of ICAO, ASECNA, UDEAC and ECOWAS. The adopted text constitutes chapter IV(v) "Air Transport" of the main report.

(d) Ports and Maritime Transport

22. The Committee considered the report of the working group on ports and maritime transport. No amendments or corrections were made and the report was adopted as a whole for inclusion in the chapter.

(e) Telecommunications

23. The meeting considered the report of the working groups on telecommunications Chapter 3 of the report dealing with the PANAFTEL network and Chapter 4 presenting a summary of sector activities undertaken by international and regional organizations were adopted without amendments.

(f) Broadcasting

24. The meeting then considered the report of the working group on broadcasting. The presentations of Chapter 3 and 4 of the report were also adopted without amendments.

(g) Postal services

25. The committee considered the report of the working group on postal services and adopted it without any amendments. It then requested ECA to include it in the general report.

Chapter V: International Co-operation and support for the implementation of UNTACDA (agenda item (4(e))

26. Having introduced Chapter V of the Report the Executive Secretary invited comments from the participants. The representatives of ITU, UPU and ECOWAS submitted papers reflecting activities of their organizations in international co-operation and support for the implementation of UNTACDA. Amendments were adopted and fully incorporated in the Report.

Chapter VI: Special developments and issues and problems of significance during the year. (Agenda item 4(f))

27. The representative of UNCTAD asked that an additional paragraph be drawn up mentioning the effective contribution made by the transport sector in the forwarding of emergency aid during 1984.

28. The representative of ITU requested the addition of a new paragraph, 206, recalling its contribution in connection with chapter 6.

28. Participants made no comments on the other paragraphs of chapter 6.

Date and place of next meeting (agneda item 5)

30. The Chairman informed the meeting of the offer made by ICAO to host the next meeting, subject to confirmation. He also recalled that UAPT had already made a similar offer which could not be carried through.

31. The representative of ICAO mentioned that consultations were under way and that his offer was still valid.

32. The representative of ECOWAS informed the Committee that his organization would be happy to invite the meeting to Lome in the event where ICAO did not uphold its intentions. His offer was subject to confirmation.

33. The Chairman mentioned in conclusion that the next meeting would take place during the first quarter of 1986 at a venue to be specified later, in view of the consultations under way.

Any other business (agenda item 6)

34. Representatives of certain organizations expressed the wish that the report would, in future, be more concise and that ECA would send questionaires to all member States of the Inter-agency Co-ordinating Committee to collect definite information on the status of projects.

Adoption of the report (agenda item 7)

35. The Committee adopted the report after some amendments. It agreed to include ICAO's amendments to the implementation of the air navigation plan, if they reached ECA during the first week of April 1985.

36. In his closing statement, Mr. Tchouta-Mousa, Acting Deputy Executive Secretary of ECA, said that Professor Adebayo Adedeji, the Executive Secretary, who traditionally chaired the IACC meetings, was unavoidably out of the country on official business and, therefore, was unable to preside over the closing ceremony. Professor Adedeji had requested Mr. Tchouta-Mousa to represent him during the consideration of the report and at the closing ceremony.

37. The Extra-ordinary meeting of the IACC had been able to mobilize views of all the agencies and produce, for the first time, a comprehensive report containing their collective achievements. The report would be given the final touches required to incorporate all of the amendments provided during the closing hours of the Extra-ordinary Meeting, and would be submitted first to the ECA Conference of Ministers as scheduled and then to ECOSOC and finally to the General Assembly. When the Executive Secretary presents the report at these meetings, he would be able to describe the individual accomplishment of each agency, and he would of course be speaking on behalf of these agencies, he said.

38. The programme of the second phase was really off the ground, the Deputy Executive Secretary continued, and with the kind of exemplary inter-agency collaboration just demonstrated, the ECA would be in a position to fully play its role as lead agency of the Decade. Although the Extra-ordinary meeting, being the first of its kind, had established an important landmark, a tremendous amount of joint effort would still be required in the remaining life of the Decade. He sighted examples such as the planned 1986 Conference of Ministers of Transport, Communications and Planning as one of the important coming events, which, being the next to the last meeting before the end of the Decade in 1988, would entail an assessment of the progress made; and necessitate reviews and revisions of programmes and priorities. The Inter-Agency Co-ordinating Committee would - therefore have to meet once again prior to that crucial meeting, sometime between January and March of 1986 to prepare for it.

39. He then paid tribute to the participants for accomplishing so much in such a short time, and for producing collectively an extensive report on the programme of the Decade in 1985; a report that would certainly enable ECOSOC and Donors alike to have a better insight into the UNTACDA programme.

40. Finally he wished everybody a safe journey home and declared the meeting closed.